

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1951

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Wisbech.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of submitting to you my report on the general health of the Borough for the past year, ending 31st December, 1951.

General Statistics.

Area 4,666 acres.

Estimate resident population mid-1951, 17,190.

Rateable value £85,369.

Sum realised by a penny rate, £333.

Number of inhabited houses, about 4,822.

Live Births.

	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	298	155	143
Illegitimate	23	11	12
Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population mid-1951, 17.3.			

Still Births.

	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	7	3	4
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, 22.9.			

Deaths	222	108	114
Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated average population, 12.9.			

Deaths from puerperal causes :—

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births
Puerperal sepsis	0	0
Other puerperal causes ...	1	3.2

Death rate of infants under 1 year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births	23.4
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	21.8
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	43.4

Deaths from cancer (all ages)	36
Deaths from measles (all ages)	0
Deaths from whooping cough (all ages)	0
Deaths from diarrhoea (under two years of age)	0
Deaths from motor vehicle accidents	1

The comparable figures for towns of approximately the same size are as follows :—

Birth rate per 1,000	16.7
Death rate per 1,000	12.5
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age	27.6

In the Borough there is a School Clinic, a Tubercular Clinic, two General Hospitals, and an Orthopaedic Clinic held weekly at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital. The Hospital previously used for infectious diseases has recently been converted to admit female chronic sick and aged patients. Infectious diseases are accommodated at Peterborough and East Dereham Isolation Hospitals.

Excellent Motor Ambulance facilities are available whilst Diphtheria Antitoxin and Pathological and Bacteriological examinations are provided when necessary.

Public Health Staff.

The duties connected with this are carried out by the M.O.H. who is a part-time officer, the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, the Borough Senior and Additional Sanitary Inspectors, all full-time officers, together with those of the Council's employees who are specially needed for sanitary work.

Infant and Child Welfare.

The Infant and Child Welfare Clinic in Norwich Road is held weekly, on Friday afternoons and is well attended.

	Welfare attendances for 1951	Children	Attendances
Number of children who attended during the year	357		
Number of children who attended for the 1st time and who at their 1st attendance were under 1 year.	144		
Total number of attendances for same			1235
Number of children attending for the 1st time and who at their 1st attendance were between 1 and 5 years	18		
Total number of attendances for same			2016
	Total	162	3251
Number of children attending at the end of the year under 1 year			125
Number of children attending at the end of the year between 1 and 5 years			232
	Total		357

Diphtheria Immunisation.

Number of children under the age of 5 years who have completed a full course of immunisation against Diphtheria during the year, 170.

Housing.

Future Requirements.

The need for further houses in the Borough is emphasised by the fact that at the end of the year approximately 650 applicants remained on the waiting list.

Building.

Houses completed during 1951 :—

Wisbech Corporation	80
Private Enterprise	3
Total post war houses completed and occupied	313
Work in hand, Corporation	86
Waiting list, Corporation	650
Work in hand, Private Enterprise	13
Licences issued, Private Enterprise, work not started	—
Waiting list, Private Enterprise.....	18

Water.

Certificate of Analysis

Bacteriological Examination.

Bacteria. Colonies per million.

Nutrient Agar at 20°C 3 days	—
Nutrient Agar at 37°C 24 hours	—
Nutrient Agar at 37°C 48 hours	1

Bacterium Coli.

Presumptive Test	0
Confirmatory	0

Physical Characters.

Colour	Nil
Turbidity	Clear
pH	7.3
Taste	Nil
Odour	Nil

Chemical Analysis (Expressed in Parts per million).

Free CO2	18.4
Acidity CO2	Nil
Alkalinity (CaCO3)	200.000
Chlorides (Cl)	28.00
Ammoniacal Nitrogen	Trace
Albuminoid Nitrogen022
Nitrogen as Nitrites	Nil
Nitrogen as Nitrates	7.40
Oxygen Absorbed (4hrs. at 27°C).....	.347
Temporary Hardness	200.000
Permanent Hardness	74.00

Total Hardness	274.000
Total Solids (dried at 180°C)	334.0
Calcium (Ca)	100.00
Magnesium (Mg)	5.20
Sodium (Na)	12.17.
Carbonate (CO3)	120.00
Sulphate (SO4)	30.00
Silica (SiO2)	6.00
Aluminium (Al)	Trace
Iron (Fe)	Nil
Maganese (Mn)	Nil
Zinc (Zn)	Nil
Poisonous Metals	Faint trace
	Copper
Lead	Nil
Free Chlorine	Nil

Extensions.

Housing Sites.....	3" pipe 149 yards
Housing Sites.....	4" pipe 136 yards
Relaying mains	6" pipe 354 yards
New connections to the mains	98

Factories Acts 1937 and 1948.

Part I of the Act.

1. Inspection for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

	Number on Register	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	32	14	—	—
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities	102	63	—	—
3. Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities (excluding outworkers' premises) ...	—	—	—	—
Total	134	77	—	—

2. Cases in which defects were found.
 Number of cases in which defects were found

Particulars	Found	Remedied	Referred		Number of prosecutions instituted
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors...	1	1	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences—					
(a) insufficient	1	1	—	—	—
(b) unsuitable or defective	4	4	—	—	—
(c) not separate for sexes	1	1	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	7	7	—	—	—

Isolation Hospital.

A total of 94 cases were treated in the Wisbech and District Isolation Hospital, the main admissions being from the following areas:—

Influenza

	Admissions	Deaths
Wisbech Borough	6	0
Wisbech Rural District	3	0
Scarlet Fever		
Wisbech Borough	8	0
Marshland Rural District ...	15	0
Wisbech Rural District	7	0
Erysipelas		
Wisbech Borough	1	0
Wisbech Rural District	1	0
Whooping Cough		
Wisbech Rural District	2	0
Marshland Rural District ...	4	0

Notifiable Diseases during the Year.

	Total cases notified	Deaths
Smallpox	0	0
Scarlet Fever	8	0
Diphtheria	0	0
Pneumonia	4	1
Erysipelas	3	0
Puerperal Pyrexia.....	0	0
Enteric Fever	0	0
Measles	14	0
Cerebral Spinal Fever	4	0
Whooping Cough	45	1
Paratyphoid Fever	1	0
Anterior Polio Myelitis	0	0

Notifications of Tuberculosis.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
35	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65 and over	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	6	1	0	1	0	1	0

I remain Ladies and Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

H. LESLIE GROOM, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
 Medical Officer of Health

Sanitary Inspector's Report for the Year 1951

Public Health Department,
Albion Place,
Nene Quay,
Wisbech.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Wisbech.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year 1951, being my thirty-second Annual Report.

This report is mainly in summary form and covers the work carried out by my department in the interest of the general health of the Borough.

Public Health Acts.

Inspections numbering 551, were made of premises where nuisances existed and of matters coming generally within the Public Health Acts. The summaries at the end of this report show details of the work carried out under notice with regard mainly to drainage and sanitary accommodation. Attention has again been given to the provision of dust-bins and these are chiefly renewals. In addition to bins provided voluntarily by private owners, 41 bins have been provided at my request.

The connection of properties to the new sewer in Osborne Road and the abolition of cesspools was given attention during the year and this work was proceeding at the end of the year.

The work recommended by the Public Health Committee, for improvements to the sanitary accommodation and drainage at the properties in Sandyland was also well in hand at the end of the year.

The sanitary accommodation at one Licensed premises has been entirely rebuilt and separate sanitary accommodation provided for females at one other.

Negotiations with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries with regard to the Wisbech Water Mains Extension Scheme and a Grant Settlement in aid of the laying of mains in the North and South Brinks have been agreed. The provision of water from the public supply has long been needed in these areas and it is hoped that the owners of properties there will take full advantage of the supply immediately the pipes are laid.

Infectious Diseases.

The number of cases of Infectious Diseases notified has again been low, and precautionary measures were taken immediately each notification was received. One isolated case of Para-typhoid Fever was notified and investigations pointed to the case being imported from outside the Borough.

Investigations into the causes of Infantile Paralysis were being undertaken throughout the country during the months of April and July and the Pathological

Department, Cambridge, asked for assistance in these investigations. The assistance was readily given and accordingly specimens of sewage were collected from twenty-seven manholes in various parts of the town.

Housing.

Endeavours have again been made to improve the repairable condition of many of the old properties in the Borough and in this respect 95 houses have been dealt with. Eighteen of these only were cases where statutory action had to be taken and two of these were repaired by the Council in default of statutory notices served; the rest were dealt with by informal action. Six cases were met with where the properties were found to be beyond repair and these were dealt with by demolition orders. The repair of old properties is still providing many difficulties and the solution of this problem is still a long way from settlement. The most that can be done is to undertake such repairs as will extend the life of the properties for a few years and provide a home for families awaiting removal to more suitable accommodation.

Caravans.

Much attention has been given to this question at various times. Many caravanners arrive in the town during the fruit picking season and leave when the season ends and provide little trouble, but many more arrive and remain and as there is no properly regulated camping site in the town, these caravanners park on the lane sides and other unauthorised vacant spaces, and as no water or sanitation is available and no place to deposit refuse, nuisances are caused to the neighbouring residents. The provision of a properly regulated camping ground, provided with drinking water and good sanitation, is needed to meet with this recurring nuisance.

The camp in Weasenham Lane was again in use during the fruiting season and accommodated over 250 persons. This camp is provided with properly conducted kitchens, ablution facilities including shower baths, and individual lockers and was well maintained.

Nine licences were issued to caravanners where sites were available in private ownership.

Ice Cream.

There are three premises in the Borough registered as Ice Cream Manufactories and where the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment &c.) Regulations are in operation. These premises are carried on in an up-to-date manner and are satisfactory. There were 66 premises registered for the sale and storage of Ice Cream during the year and in the greater majority of these premises, wrapped Ice Cream only is sold.

Rodent Control.

Rodent Control has again been carried out systematically throughout the Borough and the twice-yearly treatment of sewers has been undertaken in order to qualify for grant aid. The following additional operations have taken place at various properties, and the cost of these operations has been recovered.

Prebait laid	2,898
Poison bait laid	1,082
Gassing operations.....	21
Bodies recovered	333
Estimated kill	848
Bodies recovered from sewers	44
Estimated kill in sewers	387

Licences.

The following additional licences have been issued during the year :—

Licences to slaughter or stun animals	27
Knackers licence	1
Dealers licences to sell T.T. milk	4
Dealers licences to sell Pasteurised milk.....	3
Gangmasters licences	33
Fellmongers licence	1

Milk and Dairies.

One new dairy has been erected and there were 16 retail purveyors of milk on the register at the end of the year.

Food.

The inspection of Food has been given regular attention and the inspection of home killed meat has again taken up a great amount of my time. In this direction the slaughterhouses receive one or more visits daily and the following gives some idea of the work entailed :—

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	1596	337	330	2119	2018
Number inspected	1596	337	330	2119	2018
All diseases except Tuberculosis : Whole carcasses condemned	2		3	3	70
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	701		5	20	190
Percentage of the number inspected affected by disease other than Tuberculosis	36.37%		2.42%	1.09%	12.88%
Tuberculosis only : Whole carcasses condemned	20		—	—	12
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	98		—	—	27
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	6.10%		—	—	1.93%

Fresh Meat Condemned.

Whole carcasses of Beef	22
Part carcasses of Beef	86
Whole carcasses of Pork	82
Part carcasses of Pork	60
Whole carcasses of Mutton	3
Part carcasses of Mutton	2
Whole carcasses of Veal	3
Ox Offals (complete)	35
Part Ox Offals	72
Ox Livers	297
Part Ox Livers	205
Ox Heads and Tongues	79
Ox Lungs	23
Ox Hearts	2
Pigs Plucks	133
Part Pigs Plucks	2
Pigs Heads	19
Pigs Offals	3
Sheeps Offals	2
Sheeps Plucks	11
Part Sheeps Plucks	5
Calves Offals	1
Calves Heads	3
Calves Plucks	1

Causes for Condemnation.

Tuberculosis	17,118 lbs.
Swine Fever	6,213 „
Cirrhosis	4,212 „
Bruised	2,862 „
Dropsy	2,758 „
Inflammation	2,047 „
Pyæmia	1,105 „
Emaciation	995 „
Congestion	848 „
Actinomycosis	607 „
Erysipelas	577 „
Degeneration	434 „
Jaundice	397 „
Rash	337 „
Septicæmia	329 „
Fevered	325 „
Moribund	286 „
Parasites	272 „
Bone Taint	143 „
C. Angioma	120 „

Hydroæmia	96 „
T. Pericarditis	80 „
Pleurisy	56 „
Fibrosis	69 „
Sarcoma	50 „
Damaged	3 „

Total weight of Fresh Meat Condemned :—

18 tons 18 cwts. 0 qrs. 3 lbs.

Other Foods.

Tins	1,371
Bottles	115
Jars	114
Packets	2
Peaches	1,190
Cakes	102
Fish	953 lbs.
Fruit	816 „
Prepared Food	344 „
Cheese	198 „
Confectionery	96½ „
Savouries	32 „
Fats	26½ „
Various	131 „

Summaries**Inspection of Premises.**

Inspections under Public Health Acts	551
Inspections under Housing Acts	238
Inspections under Food and Drugs Acts	91
Inspections after Infectious Diseases	14
Inspections of Factories and Workshops	63
Inspections of Bakehouses	5
Inspections of Ice Cream Manufactories.....	9
Inspections of Shops and Food Stores	63
Inspections of Milkshops and Dairies	24
Inspections of Slaughterhouses	442
Inspections of Camps and Caravans	36
Inspections of Common Lodging Houses.....	14
Inspections of work in Progress	438
Re-inspections as to compliance with notices	919
Houses disinfected after infectious diseases...	11
Houses treated for Vermin	14
Smoke and Water Tests applied to drains.....	62
Complaints investigated	211
Housing Application	38
Ice Cream Samples taken	31

Work Carried Out in Compliance with Notices or under Supervision		Factories and Workshops.	
Drainage.		Factories provided with sufficient Sanitary Accommodation	1
Drains repaired and cleansed	45	Factories provided with improved Sanitary Accommodation	1
New pipe drains provided	23	Miscellaneous.	
New ventilating pipes provided	3	Houses repaired	95
Waste pipes trapped	2	Houses demolished	5
Inspection chambers rebuilt	1	Houses cleansed	1
Inspection chambers built on drains	23	Houses provided with improved water supply	1
Houses connected to sewer.....	11	Houses provided with sufficient water supply	8
Cesspools abolished	2	Houses provided with new sinks	24
Cesspools repaired	1	Burst pipes repaired	2
Cesspools emptied	7	Accumulations of refuse removed	3
New trapped gullies	2	Rainwater cisterns cleansed	2
Rainwater cisterns emptied	1	Bath fixed	1
Gutters repaired	1	Passage repaired	1
Sanitary Conveniences.		General.	
New water-closets provided	8	I would again express my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their consideration and valued guidance in the matters brought especially to their notice. Generally speaking the health of the Borough has remained good.	
New Urinals provided	1		
Urinals repaired	1		
Closets repaired and cleansed.....	15		
Sanitary pails provided	1		
Flushing cisterns provided to W.C's.	21		
Flushing cisterns repaired	5		

I have the honour to be

Your Obedient Servant,

E. J. SUTCLIFFE, F.S.I.A.,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

